

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2281

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PAIRS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY MADRID

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 1758

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PO

SUBJ: DUTCH DEMARCHE TO PORTUGUESE

1. DUTCH AMBASSADOR TOLD ME HE SAW COSTA GOMES YESTERDAY (MARCH 27) FOR ABOUT THIRTY FIVE MINUTES. EXPRESSED HIS GOVERNMENTS'S CONCERN ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF PROCEEDING WITH FREE ELECTIONS.

2. AS HE DID WITH THE REST OF US COSTA GOMES CRITICIZED THE "DISTORTED PICTURE" BEING PAINTED OF PORTUGAL BY THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS. DUTCH AMBASSADOR RESPONDED BY POINTING TO
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DISTORTIONS IN LOCAL PRESS.

3. DUTCH AMBASSADOR ASKED WHY PRESIDENT HAD FOUND IT NECESSARY TO CHANGE THE GOVERNMENT. COSTA GOMES REPLIED THAT THE PEOPLE WANTED A TOVERNMENT THAT COULD DEAL MORE EFFECTIVELY WITH ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. DUTCH AMBASSADOR ASKED HOW PRESIDENT KNEW THIS; REPLY WAS THAT THE ARMED FORCES KNEW IT.

4. DUTCH AMBASSADOR THEN SAID THAT IF DESIRE OF PEOPLE WAS IMPORTANT ALL THE POLLS SHOWED THAT PPD AND CDS WERE LIKELY TO WIN THE ELECTIONS. WHY THEN GOP INCREASE STRENGTH OF LEFTIST PARTIES IN GOVERNMENT? PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT POLLS WERE NOT TRUSTWORTHY; ARMED FORCES KNEW WHAT PEOPLE WANTED.

5. COSTA GOMES CLOSE BY REASSURING DUTCH AMBASSADOR THAT ELECTIONS WOULD PROCEED AND THAT THEY WOULD BE A "AS PERFECT AS POSSIBLE."

6. BELGIAN AMBASSADOR ALSO SAW COSTA GOMES YESTERDAY BUT I HAVE NOT TALKED WITH HIM. WILL NOT REPORT UNLESS HE HAS SOMETHING NEW TO ADD. LOCAL PRESS AND RADIO TODAY FEATURE STORIES ON DEMARCHES BY WESTERN AMBASSADORS, INCLUDING ANDERSON CONFIRMATION OF MY DEMARCHE. DIARIO DE NOTICIAS JUXTAPOSES HEADLINE ON DEMARCHES WITH LE MONDE STORY SAYING THAT THOSE WHO FOR DECADES DIDN'T SAY A WORD OR WRITE A LINE AGAINST POLICIES OF IGNORANCE, UNDERDEVELOPMENT AND REPRESSION ARE NOW EXCITED WITH THE UNCERTAINTIES, THE ERRORS AND SLOWNESS OF THE NEW REGIME.
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